

SPEAKING OF CANCER: JORY GRAHAM
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ANNCR: OF THE SERIOUS ILLNESSES FACED BY MAN, FEW ARE MORE FEARED THAN CANCER. IT IS A LEADING KILLER AROUND THE WORLD. IN THE UNITED STATES, IT KILLS MORE PEOPLE THAN ANY OTHER ILLNESS EXCEPT HEART DISEASE.

CANCER COMES IN MANY FORMS -- SOME OF THEM CURABLE, MOST OF THEM FATAL.

WHILE CANCER CAUSES PAIN, SUFFERING AND DISTRESS ON A MASSIVE SCALE IT HAS BEEN OVER THE YEARS ONE OF THOSE SUBJECTS SELDOM TALKED ABOUT IN PUBLIC. ONLY RECENTLY HAVE ARTICLES ON CANCER BEEN WIDELY PUBLISHED IN THE POPULAR PRESS. MOST OF THESE DEAL WITH THE CAUSES AND SYMPTOMS OF THE DISEASE, NOT WITH ITS DEVASTATING EFFECTS ON THE LIVES OF ITS VICTIMS.

A YEAR AGO, HOWEVER, THAT BEGAN TO CHANGE, DUE TO THE OF CHICAGO JOURNALIST JORY GRAHAM. WITH A REPORT, HERE IS _____.

NARR: JORY GRAHAM WRITES A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER COLUMN THAT ATTEMPTS TO LOOK PAST THE STATISTICS, TO TALK IN AN OPEN AND HONEST WAY ABOUT WHAT CANCER DOES TO THOSE WHO HAVE IT AND TO THEIR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES. SHE IS THE FIRST PERSON EVER TO WRITE SUCH WEEKLY A COLUMN. HER CREDENTIALS ARE ABOVE QUESTION -- FOR JORY GRAHAM HAS CANCER.

TAPE: CUT ONE -- GRAHAM

"WHEN MY CANCER METASTASIZED (SPREAD AND I REALIZED THAT MY LIFE LIFE REALLY WAS IN DANGER BECAUSE I KNEW THE STATISTICS FOR MY KIND OF CANCER AND I WAS VERY SICK -- I WAS HOSPITALIZED AT THE TIME -- AND VERY FRIGHTENED. AND WHILE I WAS IN THE HOSPITAL ALL THOSE WEEKS I THOUGHT, 'BEFORE I DIE I'D LIKE TO DO SOMETHING THAT COUNTS.' I WAS SO AWARE OF THE EMOTIONAL ISOLATION THAT CANCER BRINGS AND I THOUGHT, 'I'M A WRITER AND I CAN UNDERSTAND THIS ISOLATION BUT MORE THAN THAT, I CAN ARTICULATE IT.' AND I THOUGHT MAYBE IF I FOUND A WAY TO BREAK DOWN THAT ISOLATION ON A KIND OF PERSON-TO-PERSON BASIS I WOULD BE DOING SOMETHING THAT MATTERED BEFORE I DIE."

NARR: WHEN SHE LEFT THE HOSPITAL, MISS GRAHAM VISITED A LOCAL NEWSPAPER FOR WHICH SHE HAD ONCE WORKED AND OFFERED THE IDEA OF A WEEKLY COLUMN ON CANCER. TODAY, A LITTLE MORE THAN A YEAR LATER, THAT COLUMN, CALLED "A TIME TO LIVE," IS SYNDICATED IN NEARLY FIFTY NEWSPAPERS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES.

MISS GRAHAM IS A FREQUENT GUEST ON TELEVISION AND RADIO PROGRAMS. SHE HAS BEEN PROFILED IN MAJOR MAGAZINES, AND HAS APPEARED SEVERAL TIMES ABROAD.

HER WIDESPREAD APPEAL SEEMS TO LIE IN THE SIMPLE PHILOSOPHY OUTLINED IN HER VERY FIRST COLUMN. MISS GRAHAM QUOTES.

TAPE: CUT TWO -- GRAHAM

I BEGAN THIS NEW COLUMN TODAY FOR ALL OF US WHO MUST LIVE WITH AN AWARENESS OF DEATH IMMINENT OR NOT TOO FAR OFF. WE ARE WITH OUR FRIENDS, OUR FAMILIES, OUR LOVERS AND OUR MINISTERS, OUR PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL TEAMS A VERY LARGE GROUP OF AMERICANS. UNTIL NOW WE HAVE BEEN MAINLY ISOLATED FROM EACH OTHER. THIS COLUMN IS OPENING A CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION, AN EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND FEELINGS HERE AMONG FRIENDS. I WANT US TO REACH EACH OTHER BECAUSE SHARED FEELINGS ARE BETTER THAN EMOTIONS BOTTLED UP."

NARR: AS MISS GRAHAM HAS FOUND, PERHAPS NO SERIOUS DISEASE CAUSES QUITE SO MUCH ISOLATION AS CANCER. FRIENDS AND FAMILY OFTEN WITHDRAW FROM THE VICTIM, FEARING AN

NARR: INABILITY TO COPE WITH DEATH OR SUFFERING. THE CANCER
(CONT) PATIENT HIMSELF TENDS TO WITHDRAW FROM FAMILY AND FROM
THE COMMUNITY IN WHICH HE HAS LIVED AND WORKED. THE
DISTRESS OF THAT ISOLATION -- THE LONELINESS AND SEPARATION--
IS PERHAPS AS GREAT A MISERY AS THE ACTUAL PHYSICAL PAIN
OF THE CANCER ITSELF. IT IS A CONSTANT THEME IN THE FOUR
HUNDRED OR SO LETTERS THAT FLOOD MISS GRAHAM'S SMALL OFFICE
EACH WEEK. SHE TRIES TO ANSWER EACH PERSONALLY, HOPING
THE COMMUNICATION WILL HELP BREAK DOWN THE WALLS OF
ISOLATION.

TAPE: CUT THREE -- GRAHAM

"MY PEOPLE, MY READERS AND I, WE REACH EACH OTHER THROUGH
MAIL. AND WE DO BREAK DOWN THAT ISOLATION. IT WORKS
BECAUSE I'M ONE OF THEM. THEY KNOW I'M GOING THROUGH
IN SOME DEGREE WHAT THEY'RE GOING THROUGH. AND I KNOW
THEY'RE GOING THROUGH WHAT I'M GOING THROUGH. AND WE
START OFF WITH THAT AS A BASIC PREMISE AND WE JUST KEEP
ON GOING."

NARR: MISS GRAHAM'S CANCER IS ADVANCED. SHE HAS BEEN IN AND
OUT OF HOSPITALS FOR VARIOUS TREATMENTS, INCLUDING WHAT IS
CALLED A MODIFIED DOUBLE MASTECTOMY, OR THE REMOVAL OF
BOTH BREASTS. IN A YEAR OF WRITING THE COLUMN, SHE HAS
RECEIVED AN EDUCATION SHE NEVER EXPECTED TO SEEK. SOME
OF IT HAS BEEN HARROWING.

TAPE: CUT FOUR -- GRAHAM

"I'VE BEEN GOING TO A NUMBER OF SEMINARS GIVEN FOR PHYSICIANS
WHO ARE IN THE PRACTICE WHO NEED REVIEW COURSES IN THE
TREATMENT OF CANCER. I WENT TO ONE LAST FALL WHICH WAS A
THREE-DAY SEMINAR AND I WAS THE ONLY NON-PHYSICIAN AT IT
AND I WAS A FEW MINUTES LATE THE THIRD MORNING AND AS I
WALKED IN THE HEAD OF THE CANCER CENTER WAS SPEAKING TO
THIS GROUP OF PHYSICIANS AND WHAT HE WAS SAYING WAS THIS:
ANY WOMAN WHO IS A BILATERAL MASTECTOMY -- THAT MEANS BOTH
BREASTS REMOVED -- AND WHOSE CANCER HAS METASTASIZED IS
DOOMED. I STOOD THERE WITH MY WET RA.
DRIPPING UMBRELLA AND THE MATERIALS IN MY ARMS THAT WERE
PART OF THIS REVIEW AND I JUST FROZE. THEN I SAID TO
MYSELF, 'WELL, YOU CAME TO LEARN. SIT DOWN AND LEARN.'
BUT I'VE NEVER FORGOTTEN THAT."

NARR: IN ONE YEAR MISS GRAHAM'S COLUMNS HAVE ATTAINED A WIDE POPULARITY. FROM HER EXPERIENCES SHE IS NOW WRITING A BOOK ON WHAT SHE HAS LEARNED ABOUT CANCER. MUCH OF IT IS NEW MATERIAL AND IS CERTAIN TO CAUSE CONTROVERSY. FOR MISS GRAHAM IS IDENTIFYING WAYS IN WHICH SHE BELIEVES PHYSICIANS ARE NOT PROPERLY TREATING CANCER AND CANCER PATIENTS. ONE PRACTICE SHE OPPOSES IS THE PREDICTION OF LIFESPAN.

TAPE: CUT FIVE -- GRAHAM

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"I DID TWO COLUMNS THIS (PAST) WINTER ON PREDICTION OF LIFESPAN, OR RATHER, WHY THE SILLIEST THING THE PHYSICIAN CAN DO AT LEAST IN THE CASE OF CANCER IS PREDICT LIFESPAN. BECAUSE, THE TRUTH IS, IT ISN'T PREDICTABLE. IT'S THE MOST UNPREDICTABLE OF ALL THE MAJOR DISEASES. YOU CAN SAY THERE ARE PATTERNS AND YOU CAN SAY THERE IS A FINITE LIFE FOR A WOMAN WHO'S HAD A BILATERAL MASTECTOMY AND WHOSE CANCER HAS METASTASIZED BUT YOU CANNOT SAY, 'I GIVE YOU SIX MONTHS,' AND YOU CANNOT SAY THAT TO A HUMAN BEING WITH ANY KIND OF CANCER BECAUSE YOU JUST DON'T KNOW. BESIDES WHAT KIND OF MEDICAL ARROGANCE IS THAT? WHO IS A DOCTOR TO SAY TO A PATIENT, 'I GIVE YOU SIX MONTHS,' AS THOUGH IT WERE IN HIS POWER TO GIVE SIX MONTHS? AND IF HE COULD GIVE SIX MONTHS THEN WHY NOT GIVE SIX YEARS?"

NARR: MISS GRAHAM SPEAKS OUT STRONGLY AGAINST THE COMMON PRACTICE OF REMOVING A WOMAN'S BREAST OR BREASTS IF CANCER IS DETECTED THERE. SHE SEES IT AS AN UNNECESSARY DISFIGUREMENT AND NOTES THAT SOME DOCTORS, TOO, ARE NOW QUESTIONING ITS USEFULNESS.

TAPE: CUT SIX -- GRAHAM

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"I HAD I KNOWN WHAT I LEARNED IN THIS YEAR OF INTENSIVE RESEARCH, I WOULD NOT BE A BILATERAL MASTECTOMY. MY TUMORS WERE VERY SMALL AT THE TIME THEY WERE DISCOVERED AND THEY COULD HAVE BEEN TREATED WITH RADIATION THERAPY AND I WOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO GO THROUGH THIS SURGERY. I HAD CANCER IN MY BACK BEFORE IT EVER SHOWED UP ANYWHERE ELSE. SO THE WHOLE POINT OF TWO MISERABLE, PAINFUL, DISFIGURING OPERATIONS WAS UNNECESSARY. BUT IT'S GOING TO BE UP TO WOMEN TO DEMAND THEIR RIGHTS BECAUSE YOU JUST CAN'T EXPECT

TAPE: SURGEONS WHO'VE DEDICATED THEIR LIVES AND WHO TRULY BELIEVE
(CONT) THAT THIS IS THE WAY TO CONTROL BREAST CANCER TO CHANGE
THEIR MINDS THAT EASILY."

NARR: MISS GRAHAM CAUTIONS ANYONE FACING A MASTECTOMY TO SEEK A
SECOND, THIRD AND EVEN FOURTH MEDICAL OPINION BEFORE
UNDERGOING THE OPERATION.

MISS GRAHAM HAS IDENTIFIED STILL ANOTHER PROBLEM AREA FOR
CANCER PATIENTS: THAT IS, WHETHER A CANCER PATIENT SHOULD
BE TOLD HE HAS THE DISEASE. IN MANY HOSPITALS, PARTICULARLY
IN WESTERN EUROPE AND IN SOME RURAL AREAS OF THE UNITED
STATES, DOCTORS WILL NOT TELL A PERSON THAT HE OR SHE
HAS CANCER. MISS GRAHAM CONSIDERS THIS PRACTICE -- IN HER
WORD -- "DESPICABLE."

TAPE: CUT SEVEN -- GRAHAM

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"AS DOCTOR WITTMORE OF MEMORIAL SLOAN KETTERING (CANCER
RESEARCH AND TREATMENT CENTER) SAID TO ME, 'I TURN TO
THESE FAMILY PEOPLE AND I SAY, WELL, DO YOU WANT THIS
RESPONSIBILITY? DO YOU WANT TO PLAY GOD? BECAUSE THE
POINT IS, WHEN YOU DON'T LET SOMEONE KNOW WHAT HIS
ILLNESS IS, YOU'RE CONNING HIM OUT OF HIS DECISION-MAKING
ABILITY.' THIS IS A GREAT DEBATE IN AMERICA. IN SMALL-
TOWN AMERICA THEY'RE NOT TOLD AND IN BIG-CITY AMERICA
THEY ARE TOLD. HOW DARE ANYBODY DENY ME THE RIGHT TO KNOW
WHAT IS WRONG WITH MY BODY OR TO DECIDE WHAT I'M GOING
TO DO WITH THE REST OF MY LIFE. I THINK THAT'S DESPICABLE."

NARR: MISS GRAHAM OBVIOUSLY HAS MUCH TO TELL THOSE WHO READ
HER COLUMNS, MUCH OF IT NEVER BEFORE TALKED ABOUT OPENLY
AND HONESTLY IN PUBLIC. SHE SHARES A GREAT DEAL OF HERSELF
IN THE COLUMN, EVEN ON THE SUBJECT OF DEATH.

TAPE: CUT EIGHT -- GRAHAM

"I DON'T THINK IT'S SO DIFFICULT TO DIE, EXCEPT IN SOME INSTANCES WHERE IT'S SO PROLONGED, (WHERE) DYING JUST GOES ON AND ON BEYOND WHERE IT SHOULD. BUT THE IDEA OF DYING IS UNBELIEVABLY GRIEVOUS AND IT BRINGS ME TO TEARS EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT BY MYSELF. I HAVE A FRIEND WHO'S A SCULPTOR. HE'S BEEN INVITED TO ISRAEL TO CREATE A MONUMENTAL PIECE OF ART OUTSIDE A UNIVERSITY IN JERUSALEM AND HE'LL BE GONE THREE YEARS AND WHEN I SAY GOODBYE TO THIS MAN I AM CERTAIN I'LL NEVER SEE HIM AGAIN. THAT JUST FILLS ONE WITH SADNESS. I HAVE A FRIEND WHO HAS VERY SEVERE CANCER AND A WONDERFUL PHILOSOPHY FOR LIVING. PAT SAYS, 'I FIGURE IF THE SUN AND I GET UP IN THE MORNING I'VE GOT THE DAY MADE.' WHEN MY GRANDMOTHER WAS DYING -- AND IT WAS NOT CANCER -- I WAS ABOUT SEVENTEEN AT THE TIME AND I WAS WITH HER THE NIGHT JUST BEFORE SHE DIED AND SHE SAID TO ME, 'DARLING, MY SUN IS SETTING.' AND I JUST WEPT BECAUSE HOW CAN ONE SAY GOODBYE? AND PART OF WHAT I'M TRYING TO DO WITH EVERYTHING I WRITE IS TO SHOW PEOPLE HOW TO SAY GOODBYE. I WHO DON'T EVEN KNOW MYSELF, BUT I'M TEACHING MYSELF AND I'M HELPING MY READERS."

NARR: IN DOING THAT JORY GRAHAM HAS FOUND A PURPOSE TO LIVE. THAT SHE SAYS, IS ONE HER MOST IMPORTANT MESSAGES TO ANYONE FACING CANCER OR ANY THREATENING DISEASE -- A REASON FOR LIVING CAN AND MUST BE FOUND.

TAPE: CUT NINE -- GRAHAM

"THE PARENT HAS IDEAS TO LEAVE TO A CHILD, A GRANDPARENT HAS HISTORY GOING FOR HIM OR HER AND CAN SAY TO A GRANDCHILD THAT THIS IS HOW IT WAS WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE BECAUSE THE WORLD HAS CHANGED SO MUCH FROM THE TIME THAT GRANDPARENT WAS A CHILD AND THE GRANDCHILD NOW. YOU LIVE AS LONG AS YOU CAN BECAUSE THE CHILD'S GOING TO GRADUATE AND YOU WANT TO SEE THAT GRADUATION. YOU LIVE AS LONG AS YOU CAN BECAUSE YOU'RE THE HUSBAND AND YOU'VE GOT A WIFE AND CHILDREN AND YOU WANT TO TAKE THEM AS FAR AS YOU CAN AS WELL AS YOU CAN. YOU LIVE BECAUSE YOU'RE A MOTHER AND YOU DON'T WANT TO LEAVE YOUR HUSBAND AND THOSE CHILDREN ONE DAY BEFORE YOU NEED TO. THE REASONS TO GO ON LIVING ARE SO STRONG AND THERE ARE SO MANY OF THEM."

NARR: IT IS GOOD, SIMPLE ADVICE FROM SOMEONE WHO IS IN A POSITION TO KNOW. AND PERHAPS THE ONLY THING REALLY SURPRISING ABOUT IT IS THAT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME IT IS BEING OFFERED REGULARLY, OPENLY, PUBLICLY.

NARR: IN JORY GRAHAM'S OPINION, CANCER HAS FOR TOO LONG BEEN
(CONT) HIDDEN AWAY OUT OF SIGHT AND OUT OF MIND. THAT, SHE
BELIEVES, HAS CAUSED AN IGNORANCE THAT AMONG CANCER VICTIMS
HAS BRED FEAR, LONELINESS AND MISERY. HER COLUMN IS
HELPING TO MAKE CANCER A PUBLIC ISSUE AND THUS IS HELPING
TO EASE THE DISTRESS OF CANCER. SHE HOPES SOMEONE ELSE
WILL CONTINUE THE COLUMN AFTER HER DEATH.

FINALLY, JORY GRAHAM OFFERS AN EMPHATIC MESSAGE TO PEOPLE
FACING CANCER AND OTHER SEVERE ILLNESSES. IT IS
CONTAINED IN A POEM BY DYLAN THOMAS WRITTEN TO HIS DYING
FATHER AND MISS GRAHAM QUOTES IT OFTEN.

"DO NOT GO GENTLE INTO THAT GOOD NIGHT,
OLD AGE SHOULD BURN AND RAVE AT CLOSE OF DAY;
RAGE, RAGE AGAINST THE DYING OF THE LIGHT."

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